

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CCO-00 SCS-03 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 AID-20

FBO-01 NIC-01 OC-06 OPR-02 USSS-00 SCA-01 A-01 OMB-01

SY-10 NEA-10 RSR-01 /150 W

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Z O 200600Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 5455

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI IMMEDIATE

CDR USSAG NKP IMMEDIATE

ANCOMSUL UDORN IMMEDIATE 475

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 5775

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PGOV, LA

SUBJECT: ATTEMPTED COUP IN VIENTIANE

1. AS OF NOON LOCAL TIME, ATTEMPTED COUP LED BY
GENERAL THAO MA HAS BEEN TURNED BACK. ESTIMATED
NUMBER OF INSURGENTS INVOLVED RANGE FROM 25 TO 300;
BUT IN OUR JUDGEMENT, ACTUAL NUMBER WOULD BE CLOSER
TO TWO HUNDRED. RLG ARMED FORCES UNDER COMMAND
OF MR-V DEPUTY COMMANDER HAVE COMPLETED OPERATION TO
RETAKE WATTAY AIRPORT. NO INSURGENT AIRPLANES TOOK
OFF AFTER ELEVEN; AND REGUALR TRAFFIC IS NOW RESUMING.
RLG FORCES HAVE ALSO RETAKEN LAO NATIONAL RADIO
TRANSMITTER AND STUDIO, HAVE REOPENED ALL ROUTES, AND
ACTIVITY IN THE CITY APPEARS TO HAVE RETURNED TO
NORMAL.

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2. IN THE COURSE OF THE MRONING, I SPOKE TO THE DEFENSE DELEGUE SISOUK, RLGAF GENERALS SOURITH AND BOUPONE AND ALSO TO MEMBERS OF INSURGENT GROUP AT WATTAY AIRPORT, SPELLING OUT TO EACH IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS THAT USG FULLY SUPPORTS THE PRIME MINISTER AND THAT WE WOULD CONSIDER A COUP INTOLBERABLE. SISOUK LATER MADE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT CARRIED ON RLGAF RADIO STATIONS IN VIENTIANE STATING THAT HE WAS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND THAT RLGAF REMAINED LOYAL TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

3. GENERAL THAO MA WAS REPORTEDLY IN A T-28 THAT CRASH-LANDED AT WATTAY. HE APPARENTLY SUSTAINED SOME INJURIES AND WAS TAKEN TO CAMP CHINAIMO. LATER REPORTS CONFIRMED THAT GENERAL THAO MA DIED.

4. PRIME MINISTER HAS LEFT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE AND RETURNED TO HIS OWN RESIDENCE. PRIME MINISTER SENT MESSAGE TO THE PALACE AT LUANG PRABANG, INFORMING THE KING THAT CALM HAS BEEN RESTORED TO VIENTIANE AND THAT, DURING THE COURSE OF THE ATTEMPTED COUP, THE VARIOUS DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, "PARTICULARLY THE AMERICAN EMBASSY", SUPPORTED THE ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT.

5. SHORTLY AFTER INITIAL SIGN THAT SOME COUP ATTEMP WAS UNDERWAY, I CALLED UPON LPF SENIOR ADVISER PHOUMI VONGVICHIT AND ASSURED HIM THAT, TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, COUP WAS NOT SUPPORTED BY ANY RANKING MEMBERS OF THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT AND THAT THE USG CONTINUED UNALTERABLY ITS FIRM SUPPORT OF SOUVANNA PHOUA AND HIS POLICY OF NEGOTIATING A SETTLEMENT IN LAOS.

6. NO AMERICANS WERE INJURED IN COURSE OF THIS MORNING'S ACTIVITY.

7. IN CONCLUSION, BECAUSE OF THE TIMELY AND DETERMINED EFFORTS BY ALL CONCERNED, THE COUP ATTEMPT HAS FAILED.
DEAN

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TAGS: PINS, PGOV, LA, (THAO MA)
To: STATE
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